



PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS ISSUED CIVIL PENALTIES AT ENFORCEMENT HEARING

Olympia – Vice-Chair of the Public Disclosure Commission, Susan Brady, found 79 elected and 7 appointed officials in violation of state Public Disclosure laws during brief enforcement hearings held Thursday in Olympia.

Elected officials and certain state appointed officials are required under state law to file an annual Personal Financial Affairs Statement with the Public Disclosure Commission by April 15th reporting financial activity for the preceding year.

“Voters take this law very seriously and expect elected officials to take it seriously as well,” Brady said. “Regardless of whether the elected position has a salary or is considered voluntary, public officials must disclose their financial affairs.”

The governmental officials who were issued a civil penalty had previously been sent two letters asking them to comply with the reporting requirements. A letter reminding each official of his or her obligation to file was sent on May 7, 2003 and letter with an opportunity to pay a \$100 fine and forego an enforcement hearing was sent on May 23, 2003.

Officials found in violation at the hearing may appeal the decision to the full, five-member Commission for review of the action taken by the Vice-Chair.

Government officials from the Southwest Region of Washington who were assessed a penalty at the brief enforcement hearing were:

Jeffrey Skeie, City Council Member for the City of Castle Rock, was found in violation of state law and assessed a civil penalty of \$100 for a first violation.

Walt Loehrke, Member of the Columbia River Gorge Commission, was found in violation of state law and assessed a civil penalty of \$150.

William Schmitt, School Director for the Lyle School District #406, was found in violation of state law and assessed a civil penalty of \$100 for a first violation.

Tim Thompson, Mayor of the City of Ridgefield, was found in violation of state law and assessed a civil penalty of \$400 due to past violations.

Katherine Shepardson, School Director for the Vader School District #018, was found in violation of state law and assessed a civil penalty of \$150.

Kraig Howard, Hospital Commissioner for the Klickitat Public Hospital District #2, was found in violation of state law and assessed a civil penalty of \$500 due to past violations.

Civil penalties were determined using a standard process that increases depending upon circumstances such as past violations or if reports are filed at the time of the enforcement hearing.

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